

was automatic delivery of propane fuel and oil for their customers, to avoid the problem of customers running out of heating and cooking fuel because they forgot to order it. That may sound academic today, but it was a new idea at the time Autore Oil began the program. The business today represents a family tradition of customer service, with children Beth McConkey and Steve and Scott Autore active in the business. Even though Ethel is supposed to be retired, you will often find her at the Autore Oil offices as well, providing her indispensable assistance.

Tony began his community service early, and it would be hard to find another person who has contributed more to Cedarville, the eastern Upper Peninsula and to Michigan. He established Cedarville Boy Scout Troop 40 and served on the board of the Les Cheneaux Education Foundation which helped students to pursue extracurricular interests in the arts, music, woodworking or other activities that kept them motivated, learning and moving forward educationally.

Tony has served on the Mackinac County Planning Commission, the Mackinac County Housing Commission, and Mackinac County Economic Development Corporation. He is a member and past president of the Cedarville Lions Club. He belongs to the Knights of Columbus, the Christopher Columbus Association and served with the Clark Township Volunteer Fire Department. As a member of the Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce, Tony was instrumental in hosting Michigan Outdoor Writers winter and summer conventions that brought the attention of far flung readers to the eastern Upper Peninsula's attractions.

Perhaps Tony's crowning achievement is what he has done to foster the health and growth of the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency, headquartered in Sault Ste. Marie. Tony served on its board of directors for 18 years and has been treasurer of the board since 1989. He has always been willing to step in when needed, most recently as Vice Chair when that position was temporarily vacant.

The best example of Tony's hands-on, 'can-do' attitude is how he helped start a food commodity delivery program for the C-L-M Community Action Agency. His trucks and drivers traveled three counties for at least seven years to deliver food through the federal TSAP program to as many as twenty different distribution sites, free of charge, until funding came through for a paid driver and vehicle. He assisted the Agency in developing the Head Start Center which will bear his name after September 26th. Because of his work in the community, he was able to secure the use of the Cedarville Town Hall for senior meals, where they still are served today.

Over the years, the Community Action Director and staff have come to rely not just on Tony's capacity for hard work, but also on his sage counsel and advice—not a small benefit for an agency with a five and a half million annual budget.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in giving a well-deserved and heartfelt round of congratulations to a real Michigander, a devoted family man and a shining example of service to his community, which needless to say, contains many friends and admirers of Tony Autore.

READMIT TAIWAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as the United Nations General Assembly convenes for its 58th session this week, I remind my colleagues that the Republic of China on Taiwan—a free and open democratic society and a leading trade partner of the U.S.—is still being denied membership to that world body. It is time for the U.N. to readmit Taiwan.

Taiwan not only has a thriving democracy and prosperous economy, but its 23 million people make it larger than three quarters of the existing member states of the U.N. It is hard to conceive of any good reason to continue denying such a worthy country admission to this vitally important world body.

There exists now, and has existed before, examples of parallel representation of the countries in the U.N. I speak now of East and West Germany which both held memberships in the U.N. until their reunification in 1990. Today both the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea are members of the United Nations.

Taiwan is not only a free and open democracy, a bulwark for human rights and an important player in our global economy, but it is a good neighbor to countries in need around the world. Time and time again, Taiwan has heeded calls by the U.N. and others for emergency assistance to countries suddenly fallen victims to natural disasters or war. Among others, it has assisted Afghanistan, Kosovo, Turkey, Nicaragua, El Salvador, the fight against aids in Africa, and the current relief needs of Iraq.

The 23 million people of this country—who have demonstrated in nearly every way imaginable that they are responsible citizens of the world—deserve a voice at the U.N.

IN SUPPORT OF REAUTHORIZATION OF TEA 21 AND H.R. 1789, THE AMERICAN PARITY ACT

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, III

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 2003

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call once again for reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA 21), which will expire in just over one week.

Today, the House considers a five-month extension to TEA 21. But it ought to be passing a meaningful surface transportation bill that will address measurable needs in our infrastructure, provide desperately needed jobs, and bolster our economy.

Several weeks ago, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) said that we are failing to maintain even the substandard conditions of our transportation infrastructure. It described our national roads system as "poor," and our national bridges and transit systems as "mediocre." For my home state of West Virginia, the ASCE report said more than a third of state roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and

one-fifth of the state's bridges are deficient or functionally obsolete.

This should not come as a surprise to anyone. The United States is in need of infrastructure reinvestment. The Federal Highway Administration, the General Accounting Office, and industry trade groups have clearly communicated the shortcomings in our Nation's infrastructure since last year.

Almost 30 percent of our bridges are structurally or functionally deficient, and half our interstate bridges are over 33 years old.

Of the 102,859 bridges that are part of our Strategic Highway Network, which the Department of Defense would use to mobilize against global and domestic threats, over 20,000 of them are rated as deficient.

Twenty-four percent of both our Urban Bus and Urban Rail maintenance facilities are substandard.

Highway congestion in cities with less than 500,000 in population experienced an increase of 217 percent in the years 1987 to 2000. It is worth noting that most of America resides in cities with less than 500,000 in population.

Traffic delays in rush hour traffic increase travel times by 63 percent in urban areas.

Estimates place the loss of productivity and motor fuel at \$68 billion currently, and it is expected to near \$100 billion by 2009.

Importantly, the FHWA has also noted the benefits of economic investment in our infrastructure. Every \$1 billion we invest in our highways creates 47,500 good-paying jobs at a time when unemployment levels remain unsteady, and it provides \$6.1 billion of economic activity in return, which would help restore our uneven economy.

Mr. Speaker, the FHWA said that we need to invest \$375 billion over the next six years to sustain our surface transportation system in its current condition to maintain economic growth.

However, many in Congress and the President say that we cannot afford this investment in our infrastructure, which is an investment in our present and in our future. For this reason, efforts to craft a meaningful surface transportation bill as the successor to TEA 21 stalled months ago.

Congress should not oppose investment in our infrastructure to ensure our future. We know what needs to be done, yet we are being delinquent in our responsibility to the American people by not doing it. Congress should enact a surface transportation bill as a worthy successor to TEA 21.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration tells Congress that what is needed is \$87 billion for Iraq. Furthermore, a House Budget Committee study indicates that the cost of the Iraq war and occupation could easily reach \$417 billion over the next decade.

Mr. Speaker, this reflects skewed priorities. Moreover, it raises concerns for what programs may be cut to pay for the Iraq funding.

My support for our brave troops is total, and that means they must have every resource made available to them. However, the task of rebuilding Iraq cannot be America's responsibility alone. We should draw upon the support and aid of the world community.

However, we have needs at home as I have suggested. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 1789, the American Parity Act, which would require that America's priorities be addressed with the same urgency that the administration is giving to rebuilding Iraq.